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Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Development Management

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Report of the Secretariat

Summary

The present report highlights the major activities undertaken by the Secretariat in 2014 under the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Development Management. The Committee of Experts on Public Administration is invited to review and provide feedback on those activities, which are intended to assist national and local governments in addressing their current public governance and administration challenges as well as emerging issues in a globalized world.

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I. Introduction

1. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1199 (XLII) of 24 May 1967, requested the Secretary-General to elaborate more specific objectives and programmes in the field of public administration, in close collaboration with the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations concerned. It also decided that the United Nations programme in public administration should from time to time be reviewed by a meeting of experts, who should submit their report to the Council for consideration.

2. In its resolution 2001/45 of 10 January 2002, by which it established the Committee of Experts on Public Administration in its current form, the Economic and Social Council stipulated that the Committee would continue to be a subsidiary body of the Council, without change in its mandate. Accordingly, the Committee is to review the United Nations programme in public administration from time to time, taking into account the public administration aspects of all programmes of the United Nations system, and its report is to be submitted for consideration to the Council as provided in the enabling resolution, resolution 1199 (XLII).

3. In the light of the aforementioned considerations, the present report has been prepared to highlight the major activities carried out in 2014 by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management's of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and explains the Department's mandate as the custodian of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Development Management. It provides a general outline of the purpose and scope of those activities. It also undertakes to provide an overview of the Division's planning for the next year and invites the Committee of Experts on Public Administration to review and provide guidance on the Programme.

II. Major activities in 2014

4. The activities currently undertaken by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management fall under subprogramme 7, Public administration and development management, of section 9, Economic and social affairs, in part IV, International cooperation for development, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, and respond in particular to the needs of developing countries, including least developed, post-conflict or post-crisis countries and countries with economies in transition. The following summary of the major activities implemented in 2014 includes, but is not limited to, the servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies, analytical research, knowledge-sharing and training, advocacy and partnership-building and advisory services.

A. Servicing of intergovernmental and expert bodies

General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council

5. The mandates of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Development Management are defined in resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, inter alia, those pertaining to governance and public administration, information and communications technologies

for development and further implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (see Council resolutions 2012/5 and 2012/28) and the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (Millennium Summit) (see Assembly resolution 65/1).

6. Activities carried out under the Programme in 2014 included the substantive servicing of meetings of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on matters related to public administration and the provision of support for informal consultations on relevant draft resolutions and decisions.

7. The Division supported the organization of a special event of the Second Committee of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session entitled "Information and communications technology and e-government in small island developing States: responding to the SAMOA Pathway call for action", held on 14 November 2014. The event served as an opportunity to discuss the implementation of policy recommendations on information and communications technology (ICT) and e-governance contained in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (General Assembly resolution 69/15, annex).

8. The Division, together with the Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the International Telecommunication Union, held a special event during the Council's coordination and management meeting on the theme "Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: enhancing access to and security of information and communications technologies". Discussions were focused on the impact of access to and security of ICT on sustainable development, rethinking personal data, strengthening the confidence of citizens online and the roles of multilateral organizations in building trust and security in this area.

Committee of Experts on Public Administration

9. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management serves as the secretariat of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, which has been holding annual sessions since 2003 in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/60. The Committee was established by the Council in its resolution 2001/45 and consists of 24 experts appointed in their personal capacity by the Council upon their nomination by the Secretary-General. The Committee's role is twofold: first, to support intergovernmental deliberations in providing policy options and making recommendations to Member States to improve governance and public administration structures and processes for development; and second, to guide and monitor the performance of the Division in the implementation of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Development Management.

10. The thirteenth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration was held in April 2014. The Economic and Social Council, at its coordination and management meeting held on 18 November 2014, adopted a resolution on the report of the Committee on its thirteenth session (resolution 2014/38).

B. Analytical research

United Nations e-Government Survey

11. The *United Nations e-Government Survey* is a flagship publication of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which assesses all 193 Member States with respect to their e-government development and the extent of their e-participation (see www.unpan.org/e-government). The reports on past surveys provided data and analysis regarding trends in e-government readiness and development across regions and at the country level, and have become the global benchmark for measuring e-government development.

12. The 2014 edition, *E-Government Survey 2014: E-Government for the Future We Want*, coming on the heels of a 10-year period of the implementation of the action lines of the Geneva Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society, asserts that information and communications technologies are potent enablers of effective, transparent and accountable institutions. Countries in all regions of the world and at all levels of development continue to make significant investments in public sector ICT for that reason. Such efforts are vital to achieving broad public participation in decision-making, enhancing access to information and removing barriers to public service — all of which are essential if we are to ensure a future of equitable economic growth and sustainable development in a world free of poverty and hunger.

Expert group meetings

13. In 2014, the Division conducted two expert group meetings to discuss new developments and emerging trends in governance and public administration. The meetings provided forums at which expert knowledge and experience were mobilized to identify critical issues, especially for the post-2015 development agenda:

(a) In cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, an expert group meeting on the theme "Formal/informal institutions for citizen engagement for implementing the post-2015 development agenda", held in Paris on 20 and 21 October 2014;

(b) An expert group meeting on the theme "The United Nations post-2015 agenda: governance, public administration and information technology for post-2015 development", held in New York from 3 to 5 July 2013 during the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, in partnership with the Centre for Electronic Governance at the United Nations University-International Institute for Software Technology. Its objective was to advance the thinking of the United Nations on governance as an enabler for post-2015 development by exploring and identifying issues and challenges facing both Governments and citizens in their quest for sustainable development.

C. Knowledge-sharing and training

14. The United Nations Public Administration Network (see www.unpan.org) is an online global partnership network of 35 international and regional institutions and United Nations agencies. In 2014, three new partners joined the network: the

Regional Hub of Civil Service (Kazakhstan), the Regional School of Public Administration (Montenegro), and the National Institute of Public Administration (Mexico). Improved access to information and an increase in knowledge-sharing were evidenced by the 83,421,610 page views recorded for the Network during the year.

15. The United Nations public administration country studies provide information, data and analytical research on conventional and emerging topics related to governance and public administration. As part of the multi-year work on the country studies, research continued in 2014 in the areas of codes of conduct, national strategies and policies on e-government, e-government development and e-participation indices, legal frameworks and institutions for citizen engagement in public affairs, and open government data on development management.

16. The Online Training Centre of the United Nations Public Administration Network delivers capacity-building courses on various public administration topics (see www.unpan.org/elearning). The Centre grew significantly in 2014 in terms of both content and usage. Two new interactive online training courses were introduced, with the number of interactive courses totalling 18. The new courses cover the topics of open government data for citizen engagement and e-government uptake. The Centre also features 32 pdf-based capacity-building courses in English as well as several courses in other languages, including Arabic, French, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian and Ukrainian.

17. In 2014, the interactive courses of the Online Training Centre were delivered to 16,667 participants around the world. Learners commented that the courses had allowed them to broaden their knowledge and upgrade their skills in important areas. They also appreciated the ease of access to the courses, which enabled them to learn anytime and anywhere. In addition, they thought that the courses had provided them with information and skills that they could apply directly in their work and studies.

Capacity-building work

18. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management carries out technical cooperation activities in the form of advisory services, needs assessments and diagnostic missions related to its substantive expertise in the areas of public administration and development management. The Division also devises guidelines, manuals and training materials for application to the public sector.

19. During the year, the United Nations Project Office on Governance (see www.unpog.org) jointly organized the 2014 United Nations Public Service Day Awards Ceremony and Forum and participated in various events in the region in collaboration with other key development players. At the Global City Informatization Forum, held in Shanghai, China, on 5 November, the Office organized session 1, entitled "E-government development trends and issues in Asia and the Pacific region". At the Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review, held in Bangkok on 18 November 2014, the Office organized a special session entitled "ICT, E-government and women's empowerment" in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). This was a positive start in the use of ICT for gender equality and women's empowerment and showed

potential to be developed into a long-term activity. The Office also created an online portal to support its capacity-building activities and disseminate information on best practices with regard to innovation and e-government.

20. The Division provides advisory services comprising training seminars, workshops and policy dialogues at the request of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the areas of public policy, public economics, public administration and finance, with particular emphasis on initiatives fostering South-South cooperation and innovation in public administration.

21. The Division undertakes activities at the global, regional and national levels in support of developing and least developed countries through a holistic approach that integrates normative work and support for intergovernmental processes, research and capacity-building activities in order to maximize its impact.

22. A workshop on e-participation was organized in Astana as part of the third Global e-Government Forum. The workshop entitled "Developing capacity for e-participation: engaging citizens in development policy and decision-making processes through information and communications technologies", targeted approximately 85 Kazakhstan government officials including representatives from regional, national, and local government offices. Its objective was to bring together relevant policymakers and practitioners to enhance their knowledge about e-participation.

23. A workshop entitled "Innovation in public accountability: the role of supreme audit institutions and citizens", held in Seoul on 24 and 25 June 2014, was organized by the Division in collaboration with the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), the Social Accountability Practice of the World Bank Institute and the INTOSAI Development Initiative. The workshop looked at tools and resources for assisting supreme audit institutions in engaging with citizens and fighting corruption.

24. A capacity development workshop entitled "Implementing the Citizen Engagement Self-Assessment Questionnaire in the Middle East and North Africa region" was held in Cairo on 18 and 19 December 2014. It was aimed at providing guidance on how to administer the Questionnaire in a controlled examination environment, with a view to strengthening the capacity of leaders in the public sector to assess regulatory and organizational frameworks and channels/modalities for citizen engagement.

25. A workshop entitled "Innovation and e-governance for sustainable development" was held in Goyang, Republic of Korea, on 24 and 25 June 2014. Its overall objective was to support developing and least developed countries, through the sharing and transfer of knowledge and expertise in building their capacity in the area of e-governance for sustainable development. It also sought to identify emerging trends, policies and strategies, practices and lessons learned with regard to e-government development and service delivery.

26. A workshop entitled "Transfer/adaptation of innovative practices for improved public service delivery in least developed countries" was held in Addis Ababa from 17 to 19 March 2014. Participants, on the basis of specific country needs as well as the innovations reflected in the United Nations Compendium of Best Practices and Innovations in Public Administration, were able to identify areas of service delivery related to specific Millennium Development Goals and discussed the best ways to

promote innovative solutions to the governance problems of national and local authorities of least developed countries in those or similar areas.

27. A capacity development workshop entitled "Developing government and governance capacities for sustainable development" was held in Yerevan from 8 to 10 October. It was aimed at facilitating the transition to sustainable development in countries with economies in transition, including the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, by promoting collaborative governance methods at any level of government and streamlining government operations that help to achieve sustainable development, with a particular focus on the public administration and governance capacities (both institutional and human resources) needed to facilitate and empower non-governmental actors (civil society and private sector) in pursuing sustainable development.

D. Advocacy and partnership-building

Governance and institution-building cluster of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs

28. The governance and institution-building cluster is one of the 10 thematic clusters of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs. The cluster is composed of 17 United Nations entities within the Secretariat that come together to explore synergies and possibilities for cooperation in order to better serve Member States and development stakeholders within a more integrated framework for governance and institution-building. A government and institution-building platform was set up by the Division to facilitate online information exchange among cluster members.

United Nations Public Service Day Awards Ceremony and Forum

29. The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/277, designated 23 June as United Nations Public Service Day to celebrate the value and virtue of service to the community. The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 2000/231, endorsed the recommendation of the Group of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Development Management that prizes be awarded by the Secretary-General for contributions made to the cause of enhancing the role, prestige and visibility of public service. The United Nations Public Service Awards programme (see www.unpan.org/unpsa) is the most prestigious international recognition of excellence in public service. Through an annual competition, it rewards the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions with respect to promoting more effective and responsive public administration in countries worldwide. The innovative practices recognized through the United Nations Public Service Awards are utilized for knowledge-sharing and capacity-building in various regional activities and projects.

30. The 2014 United Nations Public Service Day Awards Ceremony and Forum was held in Seoul from 23 to 26 June, focusing on the theme "Innovating governance for sustainable development and well-being of the people". It was organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs through the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, in collaboration with UN-Women, and was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea.

Facilitation of the implementation of action lines C1, C7 (e-government) and C11 of the Geneva Plan of Action

31. In its resolution 56/183, the General Assembly endorsed the holding of the World Summit on the Information Society in two phases. The first phase was held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003, and the second was held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005 (see www.itu.int/wsis/index.html).

32. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, serves as one of the facilitators of the implementation of and follow-up to action lines C1, C7 (e-government) and C11 of the Geneva Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society, as called for in paragraph 108 of the annex to the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, and following the consultations among World Summit action lines facilitators and moderators held in Geneva on 24 February 2006.

Internet Governance Forum

33. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, supported the year-long preparations for the ninth Internet Governance Forum, which took place in Istanbul, Turkey, from 2 to 5 September 2014. Held under the theme "Connecting continents for enhanced multi-stakeholder Internet governance", the Forum provided a space for representatives of various stakeholder groups (Governments, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, civil society and the technical community) to discuss various Internet governance issues in an open and inclusive manner. The sub-themes of the meeting included the following: policies enabling access; content creation, dissemination and use; the Internet as an engine for growth and development; the Internet Governance Forum and the future of the Internet ecosystem; enhancing digital trust; the Internet and human rights; critical Internet resources; and emerging issues. A total of 150 main/focus sessions, workshops, open forums, dynamic coalition meetings, best practice forums and other events were part of the programme of the four-day meeting. Compared with previous meetings, the ninth Forum saw the highest number of attendees, with some 2,400 on-site participants from 144 countries, in addition to more than 1,200 remote/online participants. The meeting was webcast, and real-time transcription and a remote participation platform were made available throughout the week. Social networking platforms were also widely used by participants. As the Forum continued to implement the recommendations of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum, the ninth meeting saw a number of innovations, such as best practice forums that started their work before the face-to-face meeting, and the revitalized format and content of the Chair's summary. The book describing the proceedings of the 2013 Forum, entitled "Building bridges: enhancing multi-stakeholder cooperation for growth and sustainable development", was prepared. Meetings with the donors to the Internet Governance Forum trust fund were held on the margins of the open consultations and Multistakeholder Advisory Group meetings.

International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions

34. On 25 November 2014, the Second Committee adopted a draft resolution entitled "Promoting and fostering the efficiency, accountability, effectiveness and

transparency of public administration by strengthening supreme audit institutions". By its terms, the General Assembly would encourage Member States to give due consideration to the independence and capacity-building of supreme audit institutions in a manner consistent with their national institutional structures, as well as to the improvement of public accounting systems in accordance with national development plans in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

Other partnerships

35. As part of its global initiative to promote e-government development, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in partnership with the Government of Kazakhstan, held the third Global E-Government Forum in Astana from 6 to 8 October 2014, under the theme "Smart governance for sustainable development: new opportunities for partnerships in a networked society". The Forum helped raise participants' awareness of new e-government trends and issues, including cutting-edge technologies and innovative practices to address complex governance challenges. It also provided a platform for discussion and exchange of experiences among representatives of relevant governmental organizations and country representatives, as well as world-renowned experts and academics. The ultimate goal of the Forum was to enhance the capacity of Governments to promote smart governance, particularly in developing countries through presentations, discussions, and peer-to-peer learning. In addition, the 2014 United Nations e-Government Survey Special Awards ceremony was held to recognize the contributions of countries to e-government development. The Forum was organized by the e-Government Branch of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, in partnership with the Agency for Informatization and Communication of Kazakhstan.

Chief Information Officers Conference for Strengthening Regional Cooperation to Advance e-Government Development in Asia and the Pacific

36. The Chief Information Officers Conference for Strengthening Regional Cooperation to Advance e-Government in Asia and the Pacific was held on 5 and 6 November 2014 within the framework of the Global City Informatization Forum held in Shanghai, China, from 4 to 6 November. The Conference was jointly organized by the United Nations Project Office on Governance and the Division for Public Administration and Development Management. It provided a venue for chief information officers from Asia and the Pacific to discuss emerging trends, challenges, institutional frameworks and leadership for e-government development, to build a strong chief information officer network through the transfer of knowledge about collaborative governance and innovative e-practices for sustainable development, and to explore ways to enhance capacity-building in the region. Approximately 100 participants, including 30 chief information officers and high-level officials from 25 countries and international organizations, attended the event.

Centre for Innovation on e-Government Development

37. In December 2012, the Ministry of Information Technologies and Communications of Colombia signed a memorandum of understanding and then a project document with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in order to establish the Centre for Innovation on e-Government Development, in

collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as a promoter of electronic government globally. The project is being funded by Colombia with substantive support from the Department and is being implemented in partnership with UNDP Colombia. It seeks to promote a mechanism that goes beyond technology and is based on the generation of knowledge and the identification of trends and best practices in e-government, with a view to their dissemination and implementation within public entities at the international, regional, national and territorial levels. The project is also aimed at the promotion of a sustainable model to a broad audience, including innovation services provided not only at the institutional level, but also on the web through the Centre.

e-government initiative for the United Arab Emirates

38. This project between the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Government of the United Arab Emirates is aimed at contributing to the improvement of the country's federal e-government programme, particularly by building e-government capacity and supervising the continuous development of the national portal and the websites of various Ministries.

III. Lessons learned

39. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management will take stock of the constructive feedback received from Member States and the experience gained in partnering within the Secretariat and with other United Nations entities to continue to enhance its research and analytical capacity with a view to aligning that capacity with its technical cooperation and capacity-building activities, as well as to explore constructive partnerships aimed at delivering as one. The Division will continue to explore partnering with relevant organizations for information-sharing by various means. More innovative communications channels, including social media, will be explored with a view to strengthening the network and identifying areas for collaboration.

40. When organizing global conferences and developing initiatives in the field, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through the Division, will continue to highlight its research and analytical capacity, with special reference to the issues highlighted in the post-2015 development and sustainable development agendas.

41. Drawing on the experience gained in partnering within the Secretariat and with other United Nations entities, the Department will continue to explore constructive partnerships aimed at delivering as one. It will also continue to ensure adequate regional and gender representation with respect to participants in capacity-building workshops and will take stock of the measures taken as a result of its advocacy and advisory services for Member States.

42. The Division's vision, challenges and strategic outlook for the future will also be highlighted.